CLAIMS

1. A mat comprising a pile surface fabric and a rubber or rubber-like backing material connected to said pile surface fabric, wherein both the pile surface fabric and the backing material extend to the edge of the mat, and wherein the pile surface fabric is provided with a border portion having on its upper surface a contrasting colour and/or texture to the remainder of the pile surface fabric and extending along at least a portion of the edge of said pile surface fabric.

2. A mat according to Claim 1, wherein the border portion of the pile surface fabric extends along the entire perimeter of the pile surface fabric.

3. A mat according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the edge of the mat comprises a cut edge, whereby the cut edge is the result of a single cutting operation through the pile surface fabric and the backing material.

4. A mat according to any preceding Claim, wherein the backing material is vulcanised to the pile surface fabric.

5. A mat according to any preceding Claim, wherein the border portion has on its upper surface a contrasting colour, the border portion comprising a printed portion of the pile surface fabric, a portion of the pile surface fabric produced using pre-dyed yarns, a portion of the pile surface fabric produced by selective melting of the yarns in the pile surface fabric, or a portion of the pile surface fabric screened from a printing or dyeing process applied to

the remainder of the pile surface fabric by selective application of a liquid repellent to the border portion.

6. A mat according to any one of Claims 1 to 4, wherein the border portion has on its upper surface a contrasting texture, the border portion comprising a portion of the pile surface fabric having reduced pile height produced by selective melting, mechanical carving or chemical treatment of the yarns in the pile surface fabric.

7. A method for manufacturing a mat comprising a pile surface fabric and a rubber or rubber-like backing material connected to said pile surface fabric, comprising the steps of:

bonding a pile surface fabric to a rubber or rubber-like backing material, the pile surface fabric having elongate areas of contrasting surface colour and/or texture,

cutting through the pile surface fabric and backing material along at least one of said elongate areas to form a mat, wherein the cut portion of the elongate area forms a border portion of the mat.

8. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the pile surface fabric has longitudinal and transverse elongate areas of contrasting surface colour and/or texture forming a grid on the pile surface fabric.

9. A method according to Claim 7 or 8, wherein the pile surface fabric and backing material are cut along two longitudinal and two transverse elongate areas to form a substantially rectangular mat.

10. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 9, wherein the bonding step is achieved by vulcanization of the rubber backing layer to the fabric.

11. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 10, wherein the method includes the step of using a visual scanning means to scan the pile surface fabric and identify the position of the elongate areas.

12. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 10, wherein the method includes the step of using a mechanical guide sensor, to identify the position of the elongate areas in the case when the elongate areas are sculpted or carved, by physically sensing the change in height of the pile surface fabric.

13. A method according to Claims 11 or 12, wherein the method also includes the step of using an electronic control means to guide a cutting means to cut through the pile surface fabric and backing material along a cutting line having a predefined position with respect to the position of the elongate area.

14. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 13, wherein the areas of contrasting surface colour and/or texture are areas of contrasting surface colour, the areas of contrasting colour being achieved by a method step selected from the following:
printing or dyeing the pile surface fabric, either before or after the bonding step;
forming the pile surface fabric with areas which comprise pre-dyed yarns;
selectively applying heat on the pile surface fabric, wherein the fabric comprises a blend of fibres of polymers having different melting points, either before

or after the bonding step;
selectively applying chemicals containing a liquid repellent on the pile surface fabric, wherein the fabric is subsequently rewetted by the application of liquid and subject to heat treatment to carve the areas to which liquid repellent has been applied, either before or after the bonding step; or
selectively applying chemicals to carve the upper surface of the pile surface fabric and reveal a lower portion of the pile surface fabric having a contrasting colour to the colour of the fibres at the upper surface of the pile surface fabric.

15. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 13, wherein the areas of contrasting surface colour and/or texture are areas of contrasting surface texture, the areas of contrasting texture being achieved by the step of selectively carving areas of the pile surface fabric, either before or after the bonding step.

16. A method according to Claim 15, wherein the carving is carried out by acid carving, mechanical carving or shearing.

17. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the carving is carried out by applying a degrading agent to the pile fibres in the area to be carved, heating the pile fabric to cause degradation of the pile fibres and mechanically removing the degraded fibres.

18. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the carving is carried out by the step of selective application of chemicals containing a liquid repellent on the pile surface fabric, wherein the fabric is subsequently rewetted by the application of liquid and

subject to heat treatment to carve the areas to which liquid repellent has been applied, either before or after the bonding step.